US Army Corps of Engineers ®
New England District

Update Report for Maine

Current as of
June 30, 2001

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Public Affairs Office, 978-318-8237
Home Page: http://www.nae.usace.army.mil

Mission

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The missions of the New England District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers include flood prevention and control, emergency response for natural disasters and national emergencies, environmental remediation and restoration, natural resource management, streambank and shoreline protection, navigation maintenance and improvement, support to military facilities and installations, and engineering and construction support to other federal agencies. The six New England states cover 66,000 square miles, with 6,100 miles of coastline, 11 deep water commercial ports, 102 recreational and small commercial harbors, 13 major river basins, and thousands of miles of navigable rivers and streams. The district operates and maintains 31 dams, two hurricane barriers and the Cape Cod Canal. Through its Regulatory program, the district processes about 4,000 applications per year for work in waters and wetlands of the six-state region. We employ about 550 professional civilian employees, with about 400 stationed at our headquarters in Concord, Massachusetts. Other Corps of Engineers employees serve at Corps projects and offices throughout the region.

Navigation

BELFAST HARBOR, BELFAST (2nd CD) - This project, which consists of a 15-foot-deep harbor channel with adjoining 13- and 8-foot-deep anchorage areas, was last maintained in 1970. The harbor serves a tug and pilot boat fleet serving Penobscot Bay, a small commercial fishing fleet and a fast growing recreational boating and charter fleet. The city is reviewing its harbor development plan to determine the future of the waterfront and fleet. The New England District is working with the city to help define both parties' roles in the harbor's future. The need for maintenance dredging of the channel and north anchorage has been established.

Biological testing indicates that the material proposed to be dredged from the channel and the 8-foot north anchorage area is suitable for unconfined open water disposal at either the historic Belfast Bay Disposal Site or at the more distant Rockland Disposal Site. A suitability determination has been coordinated with federal agencies and the state. Benthic sampling of the Belfast Bay Disposal Site has been conducted to help evaluate the feasibility of using it for this work. In addition, benthic community sampling has been conducted in Belfast Harbor. An Environmental Assessment is expected to be completed in the summer of 2001 contingent upon availability of state and federal resource agency approvals and concurrences. *The application for Water Quality Certification and Coastal Zone Management consistency concurrence was submitted to the Maine DEP in May.*

SACO RIVER & CAMP ELLIS BEACH, SACO (1st CD) *– The New England District, in response to a request from the city of Saco, has reviewed the findings of a 1992 reconnaissance study of erosion problems at Camp Ellis Beach and their relation to possible effects of the north jetty (breakwater) for the Saco River navigation project under the authority of Section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968. This effort involved updating*

the costs and benefits presented in the 1992 report to reflect the changed situation at Camp Ellis and to provide the city with information should it wish to pursue implementation of possible solutions to the erosion problems. The update found that increased property values and escalating erosion at the north end of the impact zone substantially increased the benefits of the project, sufficient to support further study of a plan for jetty roughening and beachfill. A draft report was provided to the city, state and congressional interests for their consideration.

NARRAGUAGUS RIVER, MILBRIDGE (2nd CD) - The New England District, in cooperation with the Maine Department of Transportation and the Town of Milbridge, is evaluating maintenance dredging of the eleven-, nine- and six-foot-deep channel from Narraguagus Bay to the town landings, the six-foot anchorages at Milbridge, and the nine-foot anchorages at Wyman. The project serves the commercial fishing and lobstering fleet, aquaculture operations, a fish packing facility, and a small recreational fleet. A dredged material suitability determination was prepared in 1998, after consultation with federal resource agencies. The shoal material in the federal project was determined to be suitable for unconfined open water disposal at the historic Narraguagus Bay Disposal Site. A draft Environmental Assessment is nearing completion. *We have requested state agency approvals for the project and initiated endangered species consultation with federal agencies.*

PENOBSCOT RIVER, BUCKSPORT TO BANGOR (2nd CD) – The federal navigation project includes a 22-foot-deep channel to Winterport, a 15-foot-deep channel upriver to South Brewer and a 14-foot-deep channel upriver to the head of navigation at Bangor. The principal commodity is petroleum products carried by small tankers and barges. The upper 15- and 14-foot-deep channels have not needed maintenance in several decades. Pilots have, however, expressed concerns about shoaling and the need for maintenance and/or improvement dredging in that area of the project and in the 22-foot-deep channel. The city of Bangor established a working group to evaluate the feasibility and plan for channel and berth maintenance and improvement dredging, bulkhead repair and environmental cleanup. The New England District's assessment of possible navigation improvements found that improvement dredging is not economically justified, but that there is an apparent need for maintenance dredging. The state has written to add Penobscot River work to its priority listing of federal maintenance projects. *We will work to support the state's objectives for this and other projects. Sampling was conducted in early June; physical and chemical testing has not yet been done.*

ROCKLAND HARBOR , ROCKLAND (1st CD) – *The federal navigation project includes a short approach channel 18-feet deep and branch channels with turning basins extending from the approach channel to depths of 18-feet deep in the outer portions and 14-feet deep in the inner portions of the harbor.* Maintenance dredging of about 50,000 cubic yards of material with disposal at the Rockland Disposal Site is proposed to meet the needs of existing commercial fishing and recreational vessel traffic. The material proposed to be dredged has been tested and found to be suitable for unconfined open water disposal at the Rockland Disposal Site. *Consistency concurrence with Maine Coastal Zone Management Program and Water Quality Certification have been requested from the Maine State Planning Office. Public Notice of this proposal was issued March 2, 2001.*

UNION RIVER, ELLSWORTH (2nd CD) - The Union River federal navigation project, adopted in 1896, provides a channel six feet deep at mean lower low water (mllw), 100 to 150-feet wide, from Union River Bay upstream about 3.75 miles to Ellsworth. The project was completed in 1902 and was last maintained in 1911. The project serves a small mixed fleet of commercial lobster boats and recreational craft. *Maintenance dredging of about 80,000 cubic yards of material is being removed to restore a depth of five feet mlw, sufficient for the present fleet. A portion of the material is old saw mill waste (saw dust, bark slabs and edgings). The material was found to be suitable for unconfined open water disposal at the historic disposal site in Union River Bay, southwest of Tuppers Ledge.* As

the river is subject to icing, there had been concern that a sufficient time be available for the construction period. A modified construction window of November 1 through April 15 to protect salmon and other resources was agreed to by state and federal agencies. *A dredging contract was awarded in November 2000 to Burnham and Associates of Salem, Mass., for $1,423,000. Dredging began in January and was about 80 percent completion on April 15. Subsurface explorations will be conducted this summer to delineate ledge areas within the project limits. Some adjustment to the federal channel and basin width may be necessary to avoid ledge. Dredging will resume in November to complete the work.*

WELLS HARBOR, WELLS (1st CD) - The federal navigation project, as reauthorized by the 1999 Water Resources Development Act, consists of eight- and six-foot deep channels, a six-foot deep anchorage and an outer harbor settling basin. The town received state and federal permits to dredge areas at the two town landings adjacent to the anchorage for access to municipal marina facilities. The Corps and town projects generated about 170,000 and 35,000 cubic yards, respectively, of clean sand which was used to nourish adjacent eroding beaches in Wells. A $2.3 million contract was awarded in August 2000 to Gibson and Cushman Dredging Co. of Bay Shore, New York. Work began in September and was completed in early December. *In response to complaints about conditions in the entrance channel, a second hydrographic survey was conducted in early April, but no shoaling was found.*

Planning Assistance

WATER USE MANAGEMENT PLANS (2nd CD) – The Corps has completed reports on Hydrologic Aspects of water use management plans for the Pleasant, Narraguagus, and Mopang river basins in cooperation with the Maine Planning Office and others. Base flows in each were determined, as well as the impacts of blueberry irrigation on flows, so that effects of irrigation on Atlantic Salmon habitat can be evaluated by resource officials. Final reports were released in December 2000 (Narraguagus and Mopang) and in January 2001 (Pleasant River).

COASTAL WETLANDS TIDAL RESTRICTION STUDY, PHASE I (1st CD) - The State of Maine Department of Transportation (DOT) requested the Corps to prepare a scope of work to identify and conduct preliminary investigations of possible wetland restoration sites along the coast of Maine. Transportation facilities such as bridges, culverts, and tide gates at road crossings may restrict tidal flow to wetlands unless properly designed and constructed. The "Return the Tides" project developed by the Conservation Law Foundation's Maine Advocacy Center is compiling an inventory of restrictive tidal crossings along the coast.

The DOT is interested in identifying which of these sites are reasonable candidates for coastal wetlands restoration. This information could be used to consider making necessary modifications to the facilities during future maintenance and replacement activities and for mitigation purposes. *The scope of work has been finalized, and the cost sharing (50/50) agreement was signed in May. DOT is in the process of providing funds to initiate the study, planned to begin this summer.*

Flood Plain Management

MATAGAMON DAM (2nd CD) – Cross-sections across the East Branch of the Penobscot River, downstream of Matagamon Dam, were surveyed by the Corps in cooperation with the Penobscot Indian Nation in October 2000. A study is now underway of the impacts of various lake drawdown scenarios on downstream flooding. A draft report will be completed by September 2001.

MAINE HURRICANE EVACUATION STUDY - This study is being conducted under a federally-funded program cosponsored by the Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide information from which the state and local communities can develop/update preparedness plans for hurricanes. The

National Hurricane Center completed the SLOSH (Sea, Lake, and Overland Surge from Hurricanes) modeling and presented the results to state and local emergency management officials in 1999. The New England District uses the results of the SLOSH model to produce hurricane inundation maps, evacuation maps, and a technical data report. Draft inundation maps were delivered to the state in July 2000 for its use during the 2000 hurricane season. We are awaiting Maine GIS production of comprehensive information relative to roads and highways to finalize inundation maps and draft evacuation maps. We expect to deliver final maps to Maine in July 2001.

Flood Damage Reduction

AROOSTOOK RIVER, FORT FAIRFIELD (2nd CD) - The Corps awarded a construction contract in July 1999 for a flood control project to provide protection to the central business district of Fort Fairfield. The project will provide protection from flood waters and ice jams up to elevation 372.6 feet NGVD and features 2,550 linear feet of earthen dike and 290 feet of concrete retaining wall. A pumping station will handle the removal of interior drainage during a flood event. Construction began in September 1999, and the estimated $7.25 million project is cost-shared 65 percent by the Corps and 35 percent by the town of Fort Fairfield. *Additionally, an historic railroad station was relocated as part of the project. A cutoff wall in the dike and a repositioned toe drain have been installed to address problems associated with a subsurface seepage path identified in the project area. The construction effort is continuing with the only remaining task, completion of the pumping station, delayed to August 2001 in order to accommodate redesign and construction of discharge pipes.*

Superfund Assistance

The New England District is the Corps of Engineers' total support agency for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region I (New England) program for those federal-lead projects assigned to the Corps by EPA. This includes responsibility for design and construction of remediation projects. In addition, the district is providing technical assistance, upon request, to Region I for other federal-lead projects assigned by EPA to private firms, as well as for some Potential Responsible Party (PRP) remediation. During the past few years, we have provided assistance support to EPA on projects in Acton (1st CD), Lewiston (2nd CD), Saco (1st CD), Meddybemps (2nd CD), and South Hope (1st CD). Current activities are focused on the:

EASTLAND WOOLEN MILL SITE, CORINNA (2nd CD) – This site in the center of Corinna Village is a 25-acre abandoned wool manufacturing facility that operated from 1912 to 1996. The East Branch Sebasticook River flows directly under a portion of the 175,000-square-foot mill complex. Soil, river sediments, and groundwater in the area are contaminated with chlorobenzenes (a class of compounds historically used in the wool dyeing process). The site was included on the National Priorities List by the Environmental Protection Agency in July 1999. The New England District is performing additional field investigations of soil, sediment, and groundwater as part of a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) . Total cost of the RI/FS and design is estimated to be about $5.5 million. Our remedial action contractor demolished mill buildings to allow access to contaminated soil during 1999 and has excavated about 20,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil from beneath the river. *Work at the site resumed in June. Construction of a roadway detour and river diversion should be completed in July to allow access to the remaining contaminated soil. An additional 50,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil will be removed this summer and stockpiled on site until spring 2002, when we hope to treat the soil for reuse. Site restoration is expected to occur during 2003. Total cost of the removal action is anticipated to be about $40 million, and work should be complete in the fall of 2004.*

Regulatory Program

Department of the Army permits are required from the Corps of Engineers under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Corps reviews permit applications for work affecting navigable waters under our Section 10 authority and the discharge of fill material into all waters, including inland wetlands, under Section 404. At the end of February, there were 231 active applications for regulated work in Maine. During March, April, and May, 255 new applications were received. Final actions were taken on 303 applications, including three individual permits, 172 general permits, 23 not required, and no denials. The balance at the end of May was 183 active files.

PROGRAMMATIC GENERAL PERMIT - The New England District has comprehensive Programmatic General Permits (PGPs) in place in each of the six New England states covering work with minimal impact on the aquatic environment. During the last quarter, 98 percent of all permits issued in New England were PGPs. The PGPs are based on the state thresholds for most categories of environmental impacts, and applicants generally need only file with the state. The federal screening is virtually transparent to applicants, and the PGP approval is either included in the state approval letter or mailed simultaneously. Applications appropriately covered under the PGPs are generally approved in under 30 days. Applicants have commented favorably about the simplicity, predictability and efficiency of the PGPs. The recently-renewed PGP for Maine will expire in 2006.

AQUACULTURE - Aquaculture is the controlled cultivation and harvest of aquatic animals and plants. Mariculture is the raising of such crops in the sea. To date, the New England District has issued 70 permits for finfish farms; 12 permits for raft culture of shellfish; and three permits for seaweed culture. There are presently 22 salmon companies occupying a total of 45 sites; 12 shellfish companies occupying 19 sites; and one seaweed company occupying one site. "Experimental aquaculture" involves small scale operations that test a site's viability for full scale production. Many of these are permitted under the Maine PGP. To date, the Corps has approved 30 experimental projects.

The latest issue facing Maine's aquaculture industry, specifically the salmon industry, is the recent listing of Atlantic salmon in the downeast region of Maine as endangered. Farm-raised salmon may pose a risk to native fish in the nearby rivers. The Fish and Wildlife and National Marine Fisheries services are working with the Corps and the industry to reduce any impact that listing could have. The Corps held an initial meeting with the industry, the resource agencies, and the state in May 2000, in Bangor to review possible permit actions. A highly successful follow-up meeting was held in November 2000, with all parties cooperating to address a number of key issues. In March 2001 the Corps sponsored a salmon marking workshop at the urging of the resource agencies to assess the practicability of marking aquaculture fish to more readily assess the impact of escapees on wild salmon populations.

MAINE MOORINGS LLC (2nd CD) - Maine Moorings LLC applied to retain and maintain 12 single point rental moorings in six island locations scattered around Penobscot Bay. The moorings were installed in the spring of 1999 and were seasonally rented on a first come, first serve basis to recreational boaters. They were located off Camp Island, McGlathery Island, Merchant Island, Isle Au Haut, Barred Islands, and Deer Island. The Corps of Engineers was notified that the majority of the moorings were installed without the necessary Corps permits in 1999. The applicant was contacted and cooperatively worked with the Corps to address the violation. The applicant had no history of violations, and it did not appear as if the violation was knowing or willful. Therefore, the Corps declined to take punitive action and allowed the applicant to submit an after-the-fact application. The sites selected by the applicant for his moorings are traditional anchorage sites for recreational boaters. The presence of fixed moorings conflicts with traditional anchorage opportunities in these areas and poses an impact to navigation. There are no other rental moorings in these areas, so the applicant's proposal does not conform to existing

facilities. Traditional anchorage opportunities in Maine are under pressure by private and commercial (rental) mooring owners. The Corps is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of these traditional anchorage sites and the need to keep them open to all on an equal basis.

On June 28, 2000 the Corps denied the after-the-fact application and required the unauthorized moorings to be removed. In making this determination, the Corps considered the relative extent of the public/private need for the proposed *moorings; the availability of practicable alternatives; and the effect that the moorings would have on public and private use of the areas. The applicant appealed the Corps denial decision. On April 30, 2001 it was determined that several of the reasons for appeal had merit and the case was remanded to NED to reevaluate its decision.*

A meeting was held with the applicant on June 5, 2001. He has expressed a willingness to abandon several of the more contentious sites and to pursue others that are less attractive as anchorages. Similarly, he has shifted several of his proposed moorings to avoid or minimize impacts to navigation and the public interest. The Corps awaits revised plans and supporting information before determining the appropriate permit action.

Conservation & Environmental Enhancement

DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (DERP) - This Congressionally directed program (PL 98-212) provides for an expanded effort in environmental restoration. It emphasizes the identification, investigation and cleanup of hazardous and toxic waste; unexploded ordnance; and unsafe buildings, structures and debris at current and former military facilities. One hundred and eighty-one formerly used Defense sites have been identified in Maine. Site and project eligibility investigations at 180 sites are now complete, including 92 where no work was found to be necessary. The remaining site, which will be scheduled for investigation in the future when funds become available, is Area Mike Bombing Range, **North Berwick (1st CD).** Of the 88 sites where work was needed, the following efforts are underway:

A site inspection at the former **Dow Military Airfield (2nd CD)** salvage yard, fire pit training area, and dump site at the end of the runway concluded that petroleum contamination remains and that further studies are required to define its extent. This contamination does not appear to pose a significant human health risk. Further assessment will be accomplished when funding and priorities allow.

A remedial investigation was completed at **Dow Military Airfield Helicopter Pad, Bangor (2nd CD),** and additional ecological sampling, involving surface water, sediment, and fauna in an adjacent drainage area, was conducted. The final report was completed in June 2000. Contamination levels in a drainage ditch around the helipad were found to be slightly higher than background levels. We are currently negotiating final cleanup goals with the state. A supplemental remedial investigation at the former **Dow AFB (2nd CD)** underground storage tank locations will be conducted when funding becomes available.

A second round of groundwater sampling at the **NIKE LO-13, Caswell; Loring AFB Com Annex #2, Perham; and Loring AFB Laundry Annex, Presque Isle (all 2nd CD)** sites was completed in May 2000. Approved by the Maine DEP in December 2000, we recommended installation of an additional bedrock monitoring well at the Communications Annex and continued sampling at the Laundry Annex.

*A workshop was held between the Corps, ME DEP and the Restoration Advisory Board on May 11th for the **Air Force Radar Tracking Station in Bucks Harbor (2nd CD)**. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss in depth the issues associated with each alternative drinking water source under evaluation as part of the Feasibility Study. Public Comments on the Draft FS were received on June 18, 2001.* Bottled water and

carbon filters continue to be provided to residents affected by this groundwater contamination. Quarterly and/or semiannual residential well sampling is being conducted by Roy F. Weston.

A site assessment report will be initiated this fiscal year at the former Fort Preble, **South Portland (1st CD)**, subject to funding availability. A site investigation confirming the existence of TCE (trichloroethylene) at Nike 58 Site in **Caribou (2nd CD)** recommended bedrock wells be installed and sampled. This was accomplished, and samples taken in October 2000. A draft report will be available in the summer of 2001, after the spring of 2001 sampling.

CONSTRUCTION - Roy F. Weston has demobilized from the former **Naval Fuel Depot, Long Island (1st CD)**. Cleanup of contaminated buildings and soil is complete, with the exception of contaminated soil along a reach of pipeline used by multiple parties. A meeting was held in September with Maine DEP and Apache Oil Co. (Apache) in an effort to resolve responsibility for cleanup of this petroleum contaminated soil. Apache agreed to share the cost of this cleanup. The Corps is coordinating with the Department of Justice in order to determine if ,and to what extent, it can participate in the requested remediation.

Construction contracts, totalling nearly $2.7 million, have been completed at:

First District
Great Diamond Island, **Portland**
Thompson's Point, **Thompson**
Peak's Island, **Portland**
Forts McClary and Foster, **Kittery**
Jewell and Peaks Islands, **Portland**
Fort Baldwin Military Reservation, **Phippsburg**
Gerrish Island Fire Control Station, **Kittery**
Merriam Point Fire Control Station, **Portland**
Fort Preble, **South Portland**
Former Fuel Depot, **Long Island (Portland)**
Cape Elizabeth Fire Control Station
Fort Levett on **Cushing Island**
Fort Preble in **South Portland**
Former Fuel Depot, **Long Island**

Second District
Dow Military Air Field, **Bangor**
Charleston Air Force Station
Bangor Ammunition Storage Annex
Former **Presque Isle** Air Force Base
Former **Caswell** Air Force Base
Loring Air Force Base Outer Marker Annex, **Fort Fairfield**
Laundry Annex, **Presque Isle**
Communications Annex, **Perham**
Nike Site LO-31, **Limestone**
Nike Site LO-58, **Caribou**
Nike Site LO-85, **Connor**
Nike Site LO-13, **Caswell**
Presque Isle Air Force Base, **Presque Isle**
Air Force Radar Tracking Station, **Bucks Harbor**

Support to the Military

BRIDGTON RESERVE CENTER - Efforts are underway to transfer ownership of the land and buildings at the U.S. Army Reserve Center on Depot Street in Bridgton to the town. The Louisville District of the Corps of Engineers is working on the environmental documentation for the property. These documents will then be forwarded to the 94th Reserve Support Command for review and identification of any property restrictions prior to the transfer of the property by the New England District.

Special Studies

COASTAL AMERICA - Coastal America is an interagency partnership among state and federal agencies intended to protect and restore our valuable coastal aquatic habitats. The New England District Co-Chairs the Northeast Regional Implementation Team of Coastal America with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (Maine State Office). In Maine, we are supporting numerous dam removal initiatives (see Smelt Hill, Presumpscot River described below), as well as salt marsh restoration initiatives, including a Salt Marsh Restoration study at Scarborough Marsh and

a regional evaluation jointly conducted but the Corps and Maine DOT (see below). The Corps continues to evaluate numerous other habitat restoration initiatives in the state.

PRESUMPSCOT RIVER AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION (2nd CD) - The New England District has completed a feasibility investigation for the lower Presumpscot River in Cumberland County, in the town of Falmouth. The investigation examined the feasibility of removing the Smelt Hill Dam and adjacent non-functioning hydroelectric structures. The removal of the dam will eliminate the impoundment behind the dam, as well as the barrier to upstream and downstream migration of anadromous fisheries, improve the riverine habitat for anadromous fisheries migration and spawning purposes, provide an anadromous fisheries corridor for species other than the present smelt population, and produce an ecological increase in the quality and quantity of riparian habitats. The removal of the dam and adjacent structures will restore a natural river ecosystem and significant fishery and recreational values and will enhance water quality in the Presumpscot River. *A final report was issued in January 2001. Initiation of Plans and Specifications occurred in June 2001, with the approval and receipt of funding. These bid documents will be completed in late winter/early spring 2002.*

SEBASTICOOK RIVER AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION (2nd CD) – The New England District is preparing a preliminary plan to restore anadromous fish to the upper Sebasticook River Basin by providing fish passage or breaching of two dams. These dams are located in the town of Newport, one at the outlet of Sebasticook Lake, and the other about 2,000 feet downstream on the East Branch Sebasticook River. Although scheduled for January 2001, discussions continue with the local sponsors on providing support and technical analysis for the project. The Preliminary Restoration Plan will be completed once consensus is reached.

SCARBOROUGH MARSH (1st CD) – The New England District was requested by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (ME DIFW) to prepare a Preliminary Restoration Plan (PRP) for Scarborough Marsh in Scarborough. The plan was sent to ME DIFW in November 2000 and ME DIFW submitted a letter of support in January 2001. *The PRP was approved in spring 2001. Funding to undertake the feasibility study have been requested with work scheduled to start in summer 2001. The feasibility study will explore alternatives to restore as much as 135 acres of degraded salt marsh which are part of Maine's Scarborough State Wildlife Management Area just eight miles from Portland.*